

Application No.: 10/518,776
Filing Date: December 17, 2004

REMARKS

In this response to the Final Office Action dated July 27, 2009, Claims 1 and 18 have been amended to further specify the subject matter. More particularly, Claims 1 and 18 have incorporated the features of Claim 19. Claim 19 is canceled without prejudice. No new matter has been added in these amendments. Claims 1, 4, 8-12, and 15-18 are currently pending.

Allowable subject matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that Claim 19 is allowable. The patentable features of Claim 19 have now been incorporated into Claims 1 and 18, and Claim 19 is canceled.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 4, 6, 8-12, and 15-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kodan *et al.* (WO 97/02821 A2), JP 7277975, and Sawyer (U.S. Patent No. 6, 403,063 B1).

As noted, Claims 1 and 18, as amended, now recites, among other things, the features of Claim 19, which have been indicated to be allowable. As such Claims 1 and 18 are also allowable in view of these amendments as well as for their own patentable features. Reconsideration of Claims 1 and 18 is respectfully requested. As to Claims 4, 6, 8-12, and 15-17, they incorporate all the features of Claim 1 or 18, through their dependency. As such, these dependent claims are also patentable for at least the same reasons that Claims 1 and 18 are patentable. Reconsideration of the dependent claims is also respectfully requested.

No Disclaimers or Disavowals

Although the present communication may include alterations to the application or claims, or characterizations of claim scope or referenced art, Applicants are not conceding in this application that previously pending claims are not patentable over the cited references. Rather, any alterations or characterizations are being made to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue at a later date any previously pending or other broader or narrower claims that capture any subject matter supported by the present disclosure, including subject matter found to be specifically disclaimed herein or by any prior prosecution.

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Accordingly, reviewers of this or any parent, child or related prosecution history shall not reasonably infer that Applicants have made any disclaimers or disavowals of any subject matter supported by the present application.

CONCLUSION


In view of Applicants' amendments to the claims and the foregoing Remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns which might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number appearing below.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: September 25, 2009

By: 
Che Swyden Chereskin, Ph.D.
Registration No. 41,466
Agent of Record
Customer No. 20,995
(949) 721-6385

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